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## *Feature*

### Have I Not Sent You?

*By Eld Joshua Phoong*

In what was a very dark era for God's chosen race, the Israelites in the time of the Judges, in the midst of severe oppression by the Midianities, the Lord raised up His champion Gideon as a means of the deliverance from the oppression. In **Judges 6:14**, in answering the doubts and disbelief of Gideon, the angel of the Lord spoke authoritatively reassuring him to "*Go in this might of yours ... Have I [the Lord] not sent you?*" (NKJV) and answer the call to "save Israel" from the hands of their enemies from Midian.

It was during the dark days known as the period of the judges, a new and perverse generation had arisen which strayed far from the paths of the Lord and His Righteousness. This generation did not know of the Lord God, nor the works which He had accomplished. They turned their feet away from the Lord and forsook Him, and did evil in the sight of the Lord. As such, the anger of the Lord came upon them and the Lord delivered them into the hands of their enemies, who prevailed against Israel. Their enemies encamped against them to plunder and destroy the lands which they chanced upon and they suffered much in the hands of their enemies. In the midst of such tribulations and impoverishment, they cried out to the Lord.

The Lord then sent His prophet to remind the wayward people of Israel of His grace and goodness to them, and of their stubborn insolence and disobedience in disregarding the voice and ways of the Lord. Even so, the Lord did not withhold his hand of mercy despite the obstinate failure of the House of Israel by doing what was evil in His sight, as they were still His chosen people. In the time of this dark oppression, the Lord will raise a judge to deliver them from their suffering from their enemies.

It was then that the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon and reached out to him saying “*The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor*”. (**Judges 6:12**)

Despite having an angel of the Lord appear before him and receiving the unequivocal and reassurance from the Lord of his valor and the Lord being with him, far from being inspired and reassured, many doubts and thoughts raced through his weak mind despite being receiving such overwhelming support from the Lord God. He was simply unsure of what was being asked of the Lord and laid it out plainly to the Lord. Given the pitiful state of the House of Israel, Gideon enquired if indeed the Lord was with them and if so, why are such manifold calamities stacked upon them. Why were they suffering bitterly in the hands of their enemies? Where were the amazing wonders, signs and miracles of the Lord’s deliverance, which had been passed down from their forefathers? Where indeed. Why then had the Lord delivered them straight into the hands of the waiting enemies?

It was not surprising that these questions were asked. These observations made by Gideon were indeed correct. That said, the Lord was not with the House of Israel as they have sinned against the Lord and done evil in His sight. But now they had returned to the Lord and cried out once more to Him. And the Lord heard their cries. The Lord sent his prophet to admonish and rebuke them from turning away from the Lord God. After chastising them of their wrong doings and wicked ways, the Lord nevertheless intended to save His people and to deliver them from the hands of their enemies. The Lord then commissioned an angel to the one whom He had prepared to deliver His people. The angel appeared to Gideon and said the words we read earlier in **Judges 6:12** : “*The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor.*”

Was it not plain to Gideon that he was the one whom the Lord had chosen to be sent to deliver His people from oppression? And yet when Gideon heard these words, he simply could not comprehend that it was the Lord who was reaching out to him, calling to him to advance the way of the Lord and be the deliverer of His people as what the Lord intended.

Even though Gideon did not understand then, the angel persevered and continued to engage Gideon saying to him “*Go in this might of yours, for you shall save Israel from the hands of the*

*Midianites; have I not sent you?” (Judges 6:14).* Could it be any more “straight in your face”? Gideon oh Gideon, it is you that has been sent and it is you that the Lord has chosen to answer the cries of your people.

Do reflect on the reason the angel of God appearing before Gideon, speaking to him and reassuring him that the Lord was with him, calling him a mighty man of valor. The fact that the angel of the Lord had appeared in this time when many calamities had befallen the House of Israel is a clear indication that our Lord God has a plan for His people, and Gideon was the lynchpin in this wonderful plan. The Lord had willed it as such, the angel was sent to reassure Gideon of this, but poor Gideon was simply just too far removed from realizing this wonderful plan of God, and how significant a part he had to play in this plan.

Putting this in perspective today, many of us are just like Gideon. We realize that the Church is weak. We know and lament on the how slow we have been in undertaking evangelical work. We understand that the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are just too few. And then, like Gideon, we ask why. Take a step back and ask ourselves, who indeed have caused us to realize all of these shortcomings? Is it not the Lord who has moved us into realization and pricked our hearts? Why has the Lord chosen to move you and made us realize these issues and pricked our hearts, us, instead of so many other people. As with Gideon, does the Lord have a plan in store for you? Is He not calling out to you?

When our Lord Jesus Christ sent out 70 of his disciples to the field (two by two), He said to those whom He had sent, “the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few; pray that the Lord of harvest will send out more laborers to the harvest.” He then ended by saying, “*Go your ways. Behold I send you.*” (Lk 10:2-3)

When we acknowledge the weaknesses and shortcoming of the Church, how it lags behind in the work of evangelism; we must also listen in stillness, to the voice of the Lord, reaching out to us, calling for us to go out, to fortify our weaknesses, to strengthen and revitalize those areas in which we are lacking, to plug the gaps in the wall. We should not just gather around in heady murmurs, rumblings of discontent, with a plethora of complaints, lamenting about weakness we face. It is not enough, just to pray for more workers. After praying, it is we who must arise to answer the call of the Lord. As is written in **Jam 4:17** : “*To him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.*”

After receiving such clear instructions that it is the Lord who have sent for him to deliver his salvation, Gideon still looked at his inadequate self and saw his own weaknesses. As a man, he felt that he was not able to undertake this commission. But the Lord answered Gideon in this

moment of weakness and said “*I will be with you*” (**Judges 6:15-16**).

Sometimes we do hear the Lord reaching out and calling to us, but many a time, even with this calling, we reflect on our weakness and inadequacies and concluded we are not able to accomplish this task. Will the Lord choose only the strong and mighty to accomplish His commission? Is it not the Lord who determines whether we are able to undertake the task ahead, surely His task will not be left to the ways of man. To illustrate, when Moses thought as a young man full of pride, energy and passion, he was ready and able, the Lord did not use him to deliver His people.

Humbled and having grown weak as a man, 40 year later, when he felt his youth and vitality seeping away from him, when he thought he was incapable of this great task, the Lord then called on Moses to return to Egypt and be the voice of God and His vessel of deliverance for His people. Beloved brethren, know that the work of the Lord is not accomplished by the might and power of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord. Sometimes the Lord chooses what may in the eyes of man appear as weaklings by the standards of the world to put to shame those things who think themselves as mighty, that they glory of the Lord may be manifested in those who have stood up to answer His calling.

It is the Lord Himself who establishes His work. The battle is the Lord’s, and He will deliver, through our hands, those who answer His calling, His glorious and resounding victory if we answer the Lord’s calling and choose not to rebel, countermand or flee from the task which was laid for us today.

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 [Church News](#)

## **Argentina Current Holy Work Report**

Pr. Hsin-Der Chang

Argentina Church is located in the capital city of Buenos Aires. Members are divided into seven pastoral regions: Capitol Region A, Capitol Region B, North Region, West Region, Southwest Region, Northwest Region, South Region, and other remote areas. Total member has now exceeded 400 people. Members in the remote areas are unable to attend Sabbath service; therefore they plan to find a suitable service location for members who cannot join the service. Currently, they have rented a place for service in the southern region. Sabbath service started in

the afternoon; our goal is to pastor to the members as well as to train and cultivate them.

On March 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 7<sup>th</sup>, RE Teacher’s Seminar for Pre-Elementary age group was held. The theme was “Equip Yourself to Be Used by God.” Three teachers attended this training; each one of them attended Kindergarten, Elementary 1 and Elementary 2 correspondingly. In such way we received more new workers for the ministry of religious education. On June 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>, we held the first RE Teacher’s Workshop of junior levels. Approximately 12 teachers have attended. In addition to sharing and lectures related to junior level curriculums, they also have discussed challenges and difficulties RE currently encountered. How shall we show concern and solve these difficulties, so brethren and their families can grow in faith?

Student Spiritual Convocation of this year was held from July 21<sup>st</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>. Total of 9 students attended. Topic was “Family and me”, mainly focus on the current situation with the local families. The purpose is to help students to obtain and find a direction or goal in their family, their work and marriage, as well to establish the right concepts in faith. USGA had sent Pr. C.H. Chou to assist in this SSC and ESSC. Topic for evangelical service is “The Opportunity for Salvation.” Total of about 10 truth-seekers have attended which include Chinese and Argentineans. 180 members have received Holy Communion. Through this spiritual convocation, members were once again encouraged and compelled to experience the love of our Lord. Not only should they labor and toil for the works of this world, but to value more greatly their spiritual life. They are encouraged to attend church diligently and do more God’s work, so that they may glorify and shine in God’s name with their own role duty.



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## **Cambodia and Vietnam Current Holy Work Report**

Pr. WF Chen

The Cambodia pioneering areas can be divided into Phnom Penh of Phnom Penh region and Prey Veng District near the famous Dian Guang areas. Pioneering work at the capital city of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, began at the end of December 2005. Abiding by the Bible, Paul was sent by the Holy Spirit to preach in Philippi, the first city in Macedonia. We also have a clear direction in going forward with future holy work; focus mainly on supporting local churches or Chinese, based on the available manpower and finance.

Gospel pioneering in the Dian Guang areas: On August 26, 2008, we received a message from a sister in Taiwan requesting a minister to preach to her friend in Cambodia. By prayer and the right time to make contact, we have initiated spreading of the gospel in the city on October 1<sup>st</sup> of the same year

Phnom Penh District holy work report: Chinese is the main target of evangelism; we mostly preach in the restaurants or home. Truth-seekers include local Chinese and Taiwanese; some of them have joined service for many years. In the evangelical service, there were about 10 truth seeking friends; a total of about 20 people including members attended. The church has 12 baptized local members and 10 members from Taiwan and Malaysia; a total of 22 members. Local members are currently the major strength in service and holy work. It is our hope to have helping hands from foreign members who've come to Cambodia for business reasons. As bosses or supervisors themselves, would they question, "Is there a reason to have come here for?" We will show care together with their home church, encourage them, and pray for them. May God open their heart, so they may understand that, "Their present advantageous position is a given opportunity to them to serve the Lord".

Dian Guang areas holy work report: Phnom Penh Wat Phnom is the starting point, going along the Highway 6 and Highway 8 where Dian Guang Village located on the 105 km of the highway is the origin of the gospel. It has now extended to 109 km, 95km, and 58km of the highway, which are nearby Highway 8. There are a total of 26 baptized local members. Dian Guang Village is the center for Sabbath service. The Chea Sim University of Kamchay Mea, province de Prey Veng is a good place for spreading the gospel. Bro. JB Chang and Sis. Nali are in charge of leading college students in evangelical services. The work of seeding has been three years. Due to inefficacy of good follow up work, we have always been praying and bear this in our minds. Thanks to the mercy of God, Dn. JT Hsiao was arranged for visitation to

Cambodia and assist in holy work from June 10 – 18. From June 12-15, we held a four-night lecture and evangelical service for college youths. On June 15<sup>th</sup>, total of 5 people received the Holy Spirit and have received special revelation by the Holy Spirit in the prayer. From July 21 – 25 we held a bible camp for college youths who have received the Holy Spirit and those fervent to know more about the Bible.

Vietnam holy work report: From August 2012, as I was being sent by the Eastern Hemisphere Dept. of World Mission to the Philippines, I have spent fewer days on the gospel work in Vietnam. I focus mainly on preaching to Chinese in the Philippines. Since there is no residential minister in Vietnam, we are unable to utilize time on preaching to others and to continually follow up. Currently Vietnam has three truth-seeking friends who come regularly to service and five friends whom we are preaching to outside of church.

I have two Vietnamese friends; Mr. MJ Chung who is truth-seeking; Mr. PC Lee who is a caring person. If time permits, both friends can bring us to meet more Chinese, and surely we will have more people whom we could preach to, adding to the number of God's chosen people, so we may glorify God's name!



2013 Cambodian New Year Special Service



Cambodia College Youth Evangelical Service

**1. IA WORK IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Personnel</b>
9/5-15	Canada	Autumn Spiritual Evangelical Convocation (Montreal/ Toronto)	Jonathan Chou
9/11-15		Autumn Spiritual Evangelical Convocation (Vancouver)	GH Chen
9/14-22		Autumn Spiritual Evangelical Convocation (Calgary/ Edmonton)	KM Huang
9/24-10/18		National Adult Theological Seminar (Toronto)/ Bible Seminar (Calgary)/ Bible Seminar (Toronto)	ZY Chen
Sep.	Argentina	Eld.Dn. and Church Department Officer Seminar /Evangelical Seminar	SD Chang
9/3-9	FOZ	Pastoral Work/Training	W. Yeh/SM Chen
9/13-23	Dominican Rep.	Pastoral Work	Jason Hu
Sep.-Nov.	UK	Spiritual Evangelical Convocation/ Council Seminar	ZK Tsai
9/20-22	Germany	Training & Special Service (Hamburg Prayer House)	Michael Chan
9/6-8	Austria	Spiritual Evangelical Convocation- Vienna	TK Chin/ HH Ko
9/20-22		Autumn Spiritual Evangelical Convocation (Salzburg)	
Sep./Oct.	Spain	Visit & Concern (Madrid/Albacete/Barcelona)	HH Ko
9/12-10/14	Russia	Outreach/Training/Pastoral	KF Chong/ James Tang
9/5 – 10/6	West Africa	Pastoral Ministry/Training (Ghana/Liberia)	FF Chong/ Tony Kuo
9/12-10/13	East Africa	Pastoral Ministry/Training (Kenya/Tanzania)	Steve Hwang/ TK Chin/ Samuel Kuo
9/20-11/24	Japan	Pastoral and Pioneering work in Sumida and Chiba	YX Liu



9/30-10/7		Autumn Spiritual Convocation / Short Term Bible Study Seminar	TW Huang/ YX Liu/ MY Chao
9/11-9/23	Malaysia	Deacons Training/Extended Theological Education Course	FM Tse
9/1-9/15	Sabah	Preacher Refresher Course	MY Chao
9/8-10/14	Australia	Spiritual Evangelical Convocation	Simon Chin
9/19-10/13	Fiji	Pastoral Work and Gospel Outreach/Pastoral of Fiji members and follow up truth seekers	Ezra Chong/ Keoni Yang
8/19-9/11	Singapore	Adult Bible Course/Preacher Refresher Course/ Intermediate Youths and Poly Students Bible Study Course	FM Tse
9/5-16	India	Preachers & Ministers Spiritual Nurture/ Full Time Workers & CBI EXCO Spiritual Nurture/Spiritual Meeting	Joseph Chong
9/19-30		Youth Training Course/ Junior & Inter. Youths Bible Camp/Gospel Outreach/ Basic RE Teacher Training	LF Chong/ Grace Ho/LJ Soo/Wai Leng
Sep.-Nov.		Pioneering work in West Bengal/Residential Pastoral	Ezra Chong/Isaac Lee
9/5-9	Myanmar	Children Evangelism	Isaac Tan/Peter Shee/ Wai Leng
9/4-10/8	New Zealand	Spring Spiritual Evangelical Convocation (Christchurch)/ Bible Study Seminar (Auckland)	Hao Wu
9/1-20	Indonesia	Theological Seminary/ Jakarta Church Evangelistic Convocation/Divine Workers Seminar/Preacher Refresher Course	HH Hsieh
9/16-30		Theological Seminary/Daan Mogot Church Spiritual Convocation/ Bandung Church Spiritual Convocation	HD Chen

 *You Could Help the Worldwide Evangelism Mission Simply by Contribution  
a dollar a day...*



**How You Can Help**

You are called to take action for the sake of worldwide evangelism and the spreading of the gospel...with **a dollar a day**. If everyone could daily extend one dollar towards the International Assembly World Evangelism Fund, we could, together, accomplish the commission that our Lord Jesus Christ left behind. Your financial commitment will open up possibilities and resources that will lead us to save many souls.

Please take time to fill out the offering sheet available at your local church, to pass this message on to loved ones and family, and to pray for God's ministry. May the Lord be gracious to you!

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✧ *May our Lord remember your contribution and bless you abundantly!*

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